

In the Claims:

Claim 1. (currently amended) A gathering and picking device for standing plants having useful parts comprising:

a picking gap defined by a stripper plate, the picking gap having an inlet for receiving standing plants and having a first side and a second side opposite the first side, the picking gap also having a length;

a first gathering element is arranged on the first side of the picking gap and is rotated about a predominantly vertical first single axis, the first gathering element is provided with carrier elements that are designed to grasp the standing plants as the gathering and picking device is being operated, as well as for introducing the plants into the picking gap and for conveying the plants over at least part of the length of the picking gap;

a picking unit is operated to convey the standing plants downward through the picking gap so the useful parts of the standing plants are separated from the standing plants by the stripper plate; and

a second gathering element is arranged on the second side of the picking gap opposite to the first gathering element, the second gathering element also rotated about a predominantly vertical second single axis and are provided with carrier elements that are designed for grasping the standing plants, introducing the plants into the picking gap, and conveying the plants over at least part of the length of the picking gap.

2. (original) A gathering and picking device as defined by claim 1 wherein the first gathering element and the second gathering element are designed for grasping standing plants that stand laterally adjacent to the picking gap, and for introducing the standing plants into the picking gap.

3. (original) A gathering and picking device as defined by claim 1 wherein the first gathering element has an operating envelope and the second gathering element has an operating envelope, the operating envelopes of the first and second gathering elements overlap.

4. (original) A gathering and picking device as defined by claim 1 wherein the first and the second gathering elements are driven synchronously.

5. (original) A gathering and picking device as defined by claim 4 wherein the carrier elements of the first and the second gathering elements are angularly offset relative to one another.

6. (original) A gathering and picking device as defined by claim 1 wherein the picking gap has an effective length and the first and the second gathering element are designed for conveying the standing plants along the effective length of the picking gap.